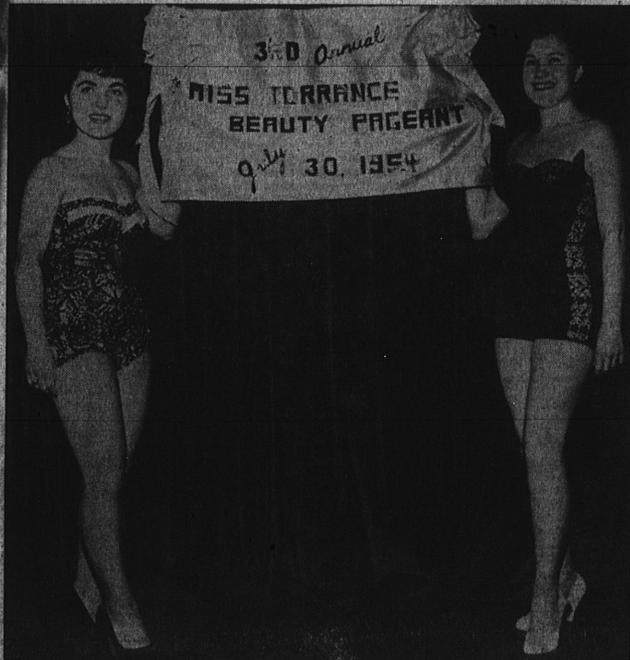


# I KILLED, SEVERAL INJURED; RAIN-SLICK STREETS BLAMED

## New Building Department Plan Approved



**THE BIG DAY** . . . Ann Leo, left, and Frieda Kittrell, contestants in last year's "Miss Torrance" contest, reveal a banner telling the date of the contest this year—July 30. Girls will parade in bathing suits and formals in Civic Auditorium on that night. Winner gets an expense-paid trip to Las Vegas.

### Date Set For 'Miss Torrance' Contest

The third annual "Miss Torrance Beauty Pageant" will be held Friday evening, July 30, in the Civic Auditorium, according to James Van Dyck, director of the sponsoring Torrance Area Youth Bands.

The contest will begin during the first part of June, Van Dyck announced, and any Torrance girl who is single and at least 15 and a-half years of age—excluding the present "Miss Torrance"—is eligible to compete.

Miss Universe of 1954, who will be selected during the Miss Universe Beauty Pageant in Long Beach in July, will be the guest of honor and assist Sandra Lea Constance, "Miss Torrance of 1953" in crowning the new queen.

The '54 queen will receive an expense-paid week-end trip to Las Vegas as one of her prizes.

### Engineer-Architect To Run Department

Reorganization of the city's building department under a qualified architect or engineer who would be responsible for the entire operation was authorized by the City Council Tuesday on the recommendation of Councilman Nick Draie.

Beating City Manager George Stevens to the punch with the recommendation, Draie asked that a job description for such a position be drawn up for the Council and a search started for the man to fill the job.

City Manager George Stevens, in his approval to the move, said he had an identical recommendation to make to the Council.

At the same time, the Council approved the appointment of Henry M. West as acting building inspector. West has been acting in that capacity since the suspension of James B. Dresser and his assistant, Cecil Smith.

Three new inspectors were approved by the Council on a temporary basis pending Civil Service examination for the positions. Employed were Harold D. Walsh, assistant building in-

### Brave Thiel Still Loose

Torrance Police Officer Leroy Schwenk spent Sunday evening on duty, vigilantly patrolling the city to guard against crime.

While he was doing so, somebody stole his car from a parking lot behind the Police station.

### Reunion With Friend Ends in Crash Death

A happy reunion with a friend he hadn't seen in six years ended in tragic death early Monday morning for a Torrance father of two children.

Barney Williams, 32, of 808 Cranbrook Ave., was killed when his car skidded 316 feet on the rain-washed pavement and smashed into a tree along East Rd. west of Denker Ave.

His friend, Harold Phibbs, 31, of Burbank, received head injuries in the crash and was listed as "critical" Tuesday at Harbor General Hospital. Hospital spokesmen said, however, that Phibbs was conscious and probably on the road to recovery. Head injury cases are always listed as "critical" for 48 hours after the accident, they said.

Meet After Six Years

Phibbs told police that he and Williams had met for the first time in six years and had spent the evening celebrating.

The rain had made the street very slippery at the time of the crash, police said. Williams' car apparently failed to negotiate a curve in the road and went into a skid, careening from one side of the street to the other before hitting the tree.

Williams, a leadman at the Torrance plant of Douglas Aircraft, died at 4:15 a.m. at Harbor General Hospital.

Survivors Told

He is survived by his widow, Emma; two sons, Robert and Steven; his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams of Hickman, Ky.; and three sisters, Jewell Davis of Torrance, and Daphne and Jo Ann Williams, both of Kentucky.

Williams had lived in Torrance for three and a-half years and was a veteran of the Air Force in World War II. Funeral

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### Series of Crashes Heaviest In Years

Rain slick streets were blamed by Torrance and area police this week for one of the heaviest series of crashes in memory of local officers.

One man was killed early Monday morning (see story below) and a number of other persons have been injured in a series of crashes.

Being credited with a skillful bit of driving yesterday was Bruce Lytle, of 2832 Danaha, driver of a Greyhound bus. Lytle's bus, headed for Long Beach, and a car driven by Dorothy M. White, of 1739 So. Western Ave., arrived at the intersection of 220th St. and Arlington simultaneously early yesterday. To avoid a serious crash, Lytle slammed his bus across the street, across a curb, between several trees, and brought it to a stop just inches short of the corner of a house on the busy corner. Three of the bus passengers were treated for injuries, none described as serious.

About 4 p.m. yesterday afternoon, an auto driven by Gordon W. Collier, 33, of 16315 So. Berendo Ave., collided with one driven by Camillo Diaz, of 1207 W. 256th; St. Mrs. Mercedes Diaz, and her three sons, Henry 15, Camillo Jr., 12, and Vicente 5.

### WEATHER

Mostly cloudy with occasional showers and winds and continued cool is the Weather Bureau prediction for today in Torrance and vicinity. High temperature today will be around 62, low 43.

### Big City Parade To Open Circus

Wild animals and local units will be featured in a gigantic street parade in downtown Torrance at noon on April 5 as a prelude to the Clyde Beatty Circus, according to Chris Sorenson, president of the Optimist Club, which is sponsoring the circus.

The circus will set up camp at 220th St. and Western Ave. for afternoon and evening performances.

For the first time in many years, the original "Tom Thumb" circus wagons, designed and built by the late Phineas T. Barnum, will take part in the big parade.

### Council Protests Shocks

Several loud blasts which rocked Torrance Tuesday afternoon were probably caused by sonic shock waves from diving jet planes and, the City Council voted Tuesday night to file a protest with the Civil Aeronautics Board concerning the shocks.



**SERIOUS CRASH AVERTED** . . . Driver Bruce Lytle, of 2832 Danaha, was being hailed by passengers on this bus for a fancy bit of driving as he bounced over the curb, between trees, and beside the house to avoid hitting car at 220th and Cabrillo. None was seriously injured.



**DRIVE-IN SERVICE** . . . Eduardo Estrella, of San Diego, took but a second to convert this shop at Carson and Western Ave. into a drive-in early Monday morning after his auto and one driven by Wendell McStella, Navyman stationed at Terminal Island, collided at the intersection. Police listed no injuries.

### Plan To Ignore Special Census Protested Here

A recommendation by a State fiscal official that special census figures be declared illegal and that the State return to the official 1950 Federal count as a basis for apportioning to cities gas tax and other State funds.

Torrance stands to lose at least \$100,000 in gasoline and other in lieu taxes per year until 1960 if the recommendation is approved.

California State Legislative Au-

ditor A. Alan Post recommended that all special census figures be declared illegal and that the State return to the official 1950 Federal count as a basis for apportioning to cities gas tax and other State funds.

The Federal census figure for Torrance in 1950 was 22,241, but since then the population here has doubled. The last special census, held last year, put the city's population at 44,914.

Since State funds are allocated on a basis of about \$5 per person, Torrance would lose about \$100,000 if the special census figure was invalidated and would continue to lose this sum each year until 1950 when the next Federal census is taken.

Councilman Willys Blount Tuesday asked that a resolution be drawn up protesting Post's plan.



**TRAFFIC VICTIM** . . . Mrs. Mercedes Diaz, of 1207 W. 256th St., awaits ambulance attendants following a crash at Cabrillo and Sepulveda yesterday afternoon. Hospital attendants said she was not seriously hurt.